

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 00862 01 OF 02 131809Z

51
ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-11 IO-14 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03

SAM-01 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DRC-01

/122 W
----- 018347

R 131720Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4492
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT
USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 862

DEPARTMENT PASS CAIRO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TS, LY
SUBJECT: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION: PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA
REVIEWS DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST FOUR WEEKS

1. SUMMARY: IN ONE-HOUR MEETING WITH ME FEB 13 PRIME
MINISTER NOUIRA REVIEWED EVENTS SINCE DJERBA DECLARATION
PROCLAIMING TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION. PRIME MINISTER HAD
LITTLE NEW TO REPORT, BUT HE CONFIRMED A NUMBER OF DEVELOP-
MENTS WHICH WE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED. PRIME MINISTER CONCLUDED
THAT EVENTS PAST SEVERAL WEEKS CONFIRMED HIS VIEW THAT
QADHAFI IS DANGEROUS MAN. WHILE HE RECOGNIZES THAT QADHAFI
COULD MAKE TROUBLE FOR TUNISIA, PRIME MINISTER IS CONFIDENT
OF SUPPORT OF TUNISIAN PUBLIC AND OF MILITARY. IT IS CLEAR
THAT IN HIS OWN QUIET WAY PRIME MINISTER HAS TAKEN CHARGE AND
THAT AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED UNION WITH QADHAFI-LED LIBYA
IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ONE-HOUR MEETING FEB 13. HELD AT PRIME MINSTER'S
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TUNIS 00862 01 OF 02 131809Z

INITIATIVE, NOUIRA CAREFULLY REVIEWED DEVELOPMENTS OVER

PAST FOUR WEEKS IN CONNECTION WITH PROJECTED TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION.

3. DJERBA DECLARATION. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE WAS PUZZLED WHILE IN PARIS ON JANUARY 12 TO HEAR FROM TUNISIAN EMBASSY THAT TUNIS RADIO WAS ANNOUNCING TO LISTENERS THAT IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT WAS TO BE EXPECTED LATER IN DAY. HE WAS ASTONISHED WHEN HE LEARNED WHAT ANNOUNCEMENT WAS ALL ABOUT. HE TOLD ME THAT WHEN HE HAD LEFT FOR IRAN A WEEK OR SO BEFORE, THERE HAD BEEN NO INDICATION WHATSOEVER THAT UNION WITH LIBYA WAS IN THE OFFING. FIRST THOWGHT THAT CAME TO HIS MIND, HE CONTINUED, WAS THAT NONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S CLOSE ADVISORS WERE WITH HIM AT THE TIME. (IN THIS CONNECTION HE MENTIONED HIMSELF, PRESIDENT'S WIFE, WASSILA, BOURGUIBA JR., AND "TWO OTHERS".) HE WAS CONVINCED THAT MASMOUDI HAD STAGED MANAGED TIMEING OF QADHAFI'S VISIT TO DJERBA TO OCCUR DURING ABSENCE OF FOREGOING ADVISORS.

4. PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA. NOUIRA SAID THAT UPON HIS RETURN TO TUNIS SATURDAY NIGHT, JANUARY 12, HE ARRANGED TO SEE PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA FOLLOWING MORNING AT 9AM. AT MEETING NOUIRA HAD CALLED PRESIDENT'S ATTENTION TO FACT THAT ANY TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION WOULD HAVE TO CONFIRM WITH TUNISIA'S CONSTITUTION WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HAD NO PROVISION FOR REFERENDUM. HE URGED PRESIDENT TO MOVE TOWARD UNION GRADUALLY, AND TO CONISER DJERBA DECLARATION NOTHING MORE THAN STATEMENT IN PRINCIPLE. PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT ON HIS RETURN TO TUNIS ON EVENING OF JANUARY 12 HE HAD ALREADY PUSHED BACK PROPOSED DATE FOR REFERENDUM. NOUIRA SAID THAT WAS NOT ENOUGH. ONE IMPORTANT FIRST STEP WAS TO GET RID OF MASMOUDI AS MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NOUIRA SAID HE TOLD PRESIDENT THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION IF MASMOUDI WERE GIVEN ANOTHER MINISTRY, BUT THAT HE MUST NOT CONTINUE AS FOREIGN MINISTER. PRESIDENT STATED THAT HE HAD LONG TALKED ABOUT REMOVING MASMOUDI FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY POSITION AND PROPOSED OFFERING HIM THE JOB OF SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE PALACE. NOUIRA AGREED. PRESIDENT LATER CALLED MASMOUDI, BUT LATTER TURNED DOWN THE NEW JOB OFFER.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TUNIS 00862 01 OF 02 131809Z

5. ALGERIA'S OBJECTIONS. NOUIRA SAID THAT HE EMPHASIZED TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA IMPORTANT OF HAVING ALGERIA'S SUPPORT IN ANY MOVE TOWARD UNION. HE COMMENTED TO PRESIDENT THAT WHILE TUNISIA COULD, IF IT WISHED, FOLLOW POLICIES WHICH MIGHT NOT ALWAYS PLEASE ITS "FRIENDS", IT COULD NOT AFFORD TO FOLLOW POLICIES WHICH ANTAGONIZED AN IMPORTANT NEIGHBOR. TO GO AHEAD WITH UNION IN FACE OF ALGERIA'S OPPOSITION WOULD

BE FOOLHARDY. NOUIRA SAID THAT PRESIDENT LISTENED, BUT AT

THAT POINT MADE NO UNDERTAKING TO BACK OFF DJERBA
DECLARATION.

6. CRUCIAL EVENTS OF MONDAY. NOUIRA SAID THAT BY TIME
HE SAW PRESIDENT AGAIN MONDAY MORNING, PRESIDENT HAD COME
AROUND TO HIS (NOUIRA'S) VIEWPOINT. (PRIME MINISTER COMMENTED
IN PASSING THAT HE HAD SEEN PRESIDENT JUST AFTER PRESIDENT
HAD SEEN ME. HE TOOK CREDIT FOR HAVING PROPOSED TO PRESIDENT
THAT HE MEET WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR AND ME RESPECTIVELY
THAT MORNING.) PRESIDENT ACCEPTED PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSAL
THAT IMPORTANT MEETING OF CABINET AND PARTY OFFICIALS BE
CALLED FOR FOLLOWING DAY FOR PURPOSE OF ENDORSING COMMUNIQUE
EXPLAINING GOT'S GRADUALISTIC APPROACH TOWARD UNION (I.E.
FIRST OFFICIAL STATEMENT INDICATING A BACKING-OFF FROM
MERGE UNDERTAKING). PRIME MINISTER SAID HE DRAFTED PROPOSED
COMMUNIQUE AND BOURGUIBA APPROVED IT VERBATIM. SO DID
ASSEMBLED CABINET MEMBERS AND PARTY LEADERS AFTER SOME DISCUSSION.
(TUNIS 224).

7. QADHAFI'S END-RUN TO GENEVA. PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS
AGAIN CAUGHT BY SURPRISE WHEN HE LEARNED THAT QADHAFI WAS
AIRBOURNE FOR SWITZERLAND ON JANUARY 25. HE IMMEDIATELY SENSED
WHAT QADHAFI WAS UP TO, CALLED TOGETHER KEY OFFICIALS AND
TOOK OFF AFTER HIM. HE SAID WHEN HE MET QADHAFI BEFORE THEY
SAW PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA, QADHAFI LAMELY SAID TO HIM. "I
CAME AT THIS POINT BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WERE ALREADY HERE WITH
THE PRESIDENT". NOUIRA SAID HE REPLIED, "I CAME BACK
EXPRESSLY TO RECEIVE YOU". NOUIRA COMMENTED WRYLY THAT
QADHAFI WAS OBVIOUSLY UNHAPPY TO SEE HIM. HE SAID AT MEETING

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 TUNIS 00862 01 OF 02 131809Z

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 00862 02 OF 02 131759Z

51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-11 IO-14 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03

SAM-01 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DRC-01

/122 W

----- 018233

R 131720Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4493
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT
USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS 862

DEPARTMENT PASS CAIRO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TS, LY
SUBJECT: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION: PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA
REVIEWS DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST FOUR WEEKS

WITH BOURGUIBA, QADHAFI PRESSED HARD FOR "DATES"
-- BOTH REFERENDUM DATE AS WELL AS DATE FOR
CONSUMMATION OF UNION. NOUIRA SAID HE STOOD FIRM,

CONTENDING THAT HE COULD NOT TIE TUNISIA DOWN TO
ANY DATES AND, INDEED, COULD NOT EVEN ASSURE THAT
UNION WOULD TAKE PLACE. "WHAT," HE ASKED QADHAFI,
"IF OUR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REFUSES TO APPROVE OF THE
PRINCIPLE OF UNION? WE HAVE TO PROCEED BY
CONSTITUTIONAL MEANS."

8. OTHER ATTEMPTED QADHAFI END -RUNS. PRIME MINISTER
SAID THAT QADHAFI HAD EARLIER SOUGHT TO REACH PRESIDENT'S
WIFE, WASSILA BOURGUIBA, WHO WAS VISITING LEBANON. HE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TUNIS 00862 02 OF 02 131759Z

HAD SENT REPRESENTATIVE TO "KNOCK ON HER DOOR AT 11 PM,
1 AM AND 4 AM, " IN EFFORT TO PERSUADE HER TO GET PRESIDENT
BOURGUIBA BACK ON UNION TRACK. NOUIRA CHARACTERIZED THIS
ACTION AS REPREHENSIBLE. THEN, HE CONTINUED, AFTER
MEETING WITH BOURGUIBA AT GSTAAD QADHAFI HAD TAKEN TUNISIAN

MINISTERS MZALI AND MOALLA ASIDE IN EFFORT TO WORK ON THEM.
HE ASKED MZALI WHETHER HE WAS NOT UNHAPPY AT HAVING
BEEN REMOVED FROM HIS POSITION AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION

AND WHETHER THIS DID NOT REFLECT TUNISIAN GOVT'S UN-HAPPINESS WITH HIS "ARABISM." MZALI EVIDENTLY SAID THAT THIS MOVE WAS PERFECTLY NORMAL AND THAT HE CONTINUED TO BE HELD IN HIGH REGARD IN GOT CIRCLES. MOALLA ALLEGEDLY ALSO TURNED ASIDE QADAIFI'S EFFORTS.

9. MASMOUDI ANTICS. NOUIRA SAID HE KNEW THAT MASMOUDI HAD SPENT THREE DAYS IN LIBYA LAST WEEK AND HAD THEN GONE TO GSTAAD TO VISIT BOURGUIBA. MASMOUDI HAD SOUGHT TO ARGUE BOURGUIBA OUT OF BACKING AWAY FROM UNION WITH LIBYA BUT, ACCORDING TO NOUIRA, MASMOUDI GOT NOWHERE. HE SAID BOURGUIBA KEPT TELLING MASMOUDI, "YOU WILL ALWAYS BE LIKE MY SON." BUT THAT WAS ALL. WHEN NOUIRA SAW BOURGUIBA FOLLOWING DAY, AFTER NOUIRA'S

VISIT WITH BOUMEDIENE IN ANNABA, HE ASKED PRESIDENT HOW A MAN LIKE MASMOUDI COULD CONTINUE TO BE ALLOWED TO SERVE "AT THE HEART OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP." HE SAID THAT BOURGUIBA HAD IMMEDIATELY WRITTEN OUT THE ORDER EXPELLING MASMOUDI FROM THE PARTY AND TRANSMITTED IT TO TUNIS (TUNIS 804).

10. CONCLUSION: PRIME MINISTER CONCLUDED THAT EVENTS OF PAST SEVERAL WEEKS HAD ONLY SERVED TO CONFIRM HIS VIEW THAT QADHAFI IS A DANGEROUS MAN. HE RECOGNIZED THAT QADHAFI COULD CAUSE TROUBLE FOR TUNISIA IN WAY OF ATTEMPTED SUBVERSION, BUT HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF TUNISIAN PUBLIC AND, IN PARTICULAR, OF MILITARY. RECENT OPEN DEBATE ON UNION AT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REFLECTED GENERAL ENDORSEMENT FOR HIS POLICY OF APPROACHING UNION WITH CONSIDERABLE CAUTION. HE SAID QADHAFI'S RECENT SPEECH OF FEB 10 IN WHICH HE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TUNIS 00862 02 OF 02 131759Z

ATTACKED TUNISIA HAS SOLIDIFIED POPULAR SUPPORT FOR CURRENT GOVERNMENT POLICY.

11. COMMENT: IT IS OBVIOUS THAT IN HIS OWN QUIET WAY PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA HAS TAKEN CHARGE. HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN EFFECTIVELY TORPEDOING PROPOSAL FOR MERGER WITH LIBYA, AND APPEARS IN THE PROCESS TO HAVE SUPPORT OF ALL KEY ELEMENTS OF POPULATION. AS LONG AS QADHAFI IS PRESIDENT OF LIBYA AND AT SAME TIME NOUIRA IS PRIME MINISTER IN TUNISIA, TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION IS VIRTUALLY OUT OF THE QUESTION.

SEELYE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, FEDERATION, PRESIDENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, REFERENDUMS, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: rowelle0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TUNIS00862
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740234/aaaabfyy.tel
Line Count: 275
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: rowelle0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <27-Sep-2002 by rowelle0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION: PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA REVIEWS DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST FOUR WEEKS
TAGS: PFOR, TS, LY, US, (NOUIRA, HEDI), (MASMOUDI, MOHAMED), (QADHAFI, MUAMMAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005